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ABSTRACT

These three papers address educational improvement through partnerships between institutions of higher education and elementary/secondary schools. In the first paper, "Partnerships for America's Children," Kati Perry Haycock challenges educators in elementary/secondary schools and in higher education to use partnerships to create a continuum for systematizing teaching and learning excellence, K-16. The second paper, "Overcoming Barriers to Change", by Phyllis Hart, describes an intervention program, College Core, in an urban Los Angeles high school. This support program involving students, teachers, parents, and the community has boosted the high school's college-going rate from 15 percent to 65 percent. The third paper, "School Success for Black Students" (Jacqueline Irvine) discusses the issue of school failure of African American students and the role of failed cultural synchronization between students who fail and their schools. Examples are offered of how this cultural discontinuity in formal and informal communications can cause friction and misinterpretation and lead to lower student achievement. (Contains 23 references.) (JLS)

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Improving Student Achievement Through Partnerships

Three presentations from AAHE's First and Second National Conferences on School/College Collaboration, 1990 and 1991

A publication of AAHE's Office of School/College Collaboration
American Association for Higher Education

Kati Perry Haycock
Phyllis Hart
Jacqueline Jordan Irvine

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IMPROVING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS
Three presentations from AAHE's First and Second National Conferences on School/College Collaboration

Kati Perry Haycock
Phyllis Hart
Jacqueline Jordan Irvine

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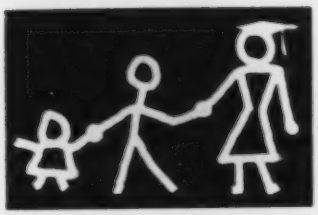


Introduction

In 1990, the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) initiated an annual National Conference on School/College Collaboration. The aim of the conference was to address the growing need for a national forum where school and college faculty, staff, and administrators could meet to discuss current issues and strategies to advance student achievement through partnerships and to share information about new ideas in collaboration. We are grateful to the Carnegie Corporation of New York and The College Board for their support of development of the conference.

The three presentations that follow were delivered at AAHE's First and Second National Conferences on School/Collaboration, in 1990 and 1991.

The first, "Partnerships for America's Children," by Kati Perry Haycock, was the closing address to the 1990 conference, "Mainstreaming Academic Partnerships." In her presentation, Haycock challenges educators in schools and in colleges and universities to look beyond pet projects, which reach a few students, and to use partnerships to create a continuum for systematizing teaching and learning excellence in grades K-16.

The speech fueled AAHE's interest in partnerships that focus on students, and her words became the beacon guiding the planning for AAHE's 1991 conference, "Within Our Reach: Improving Student Achievement Through Partnerships."

The second and third presentations were delivered at that Second National Conference on School/College Collaboration. They explore why significant numbers of low-income and minority students are not completing high school and/or going on to postsecondary education, and they offer methods of addressing the problem.

In "Overcoming Barriers to Change," Phyllis Hart tells the story of Banning High School, an urban Los Angeles high school of 3,000 students — 92 percent of whom are minority. In the 1970s at Banning, very few students went on to college, and many dropped out before graduating from high school. Moreover, very little movement existed to encourage change in the status quo. Many school administrators and faculty accepted either that these students could not learn or that just too many barriers stood in their way.

In her speech, Hart, who spent eighteen years at Banning as a teacher and counselor, chronicles the remarkable "change process" that took place at Banning High School. Hart details how in 1975 she and two colleagues began a movement that boosted the school's college-going rate from 15 percent to 65 percent, by recognizing that many of the barriers students faced were not created by the students themselves, and that with a lot of hard work and support from students, faculty, and parents, the barriers could be overcome.

Finally, in "School Success for Black Students," Jacqueline Irvine, professor of education at Emory University, discusses the issue of school failure of African American students. Her examination links this failure to the "lack of cultural synchronization" between the students and the school. She offers examples of how this cultural discontinuity — in styles of personal presentation and communication, for instance — can cause friction and misinterpretations in the classroom and lead to lower student achievement.

Irvine offers thoughts on how schools and colleges can form effective partnerships to help overcome these discrepancies and advance student achievement. In presenting the problems and offering solutions, Irvine offers unique insight into the African American perspective. Irvine concludes, "Unless primary, secondary, and higher education programs collaborate to make significant reforms, this entire country, as well as minority students, will be 'at risk.' "

We hope you find these presentations useful and informative. In the coming years, we look forward to expanding this publication series with other presentations from future National Conferences on School/College Collaboration.

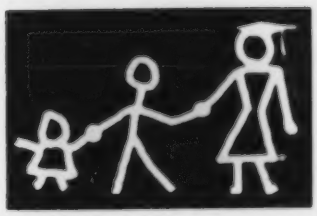
Carol F. Stoel
Director, AAHE Office of School/College Collaboration

Partnerships For America's Children

by Kati Perry Haycock

Presented at AAHE's First National Conference
on School/College Collaboration,
June 17-20, 1990, Chicago, Illinois.

Kati Perry Haycock is director of the Education Roundtable at AAHE. When she delivered this address she was vice president of the Children's Defense Fund. Previously, she had been coordinator for outreach services for the University of California System and founding president of The Achievement Council in California.



Pulling together some of what I have heard here with bits and pieces of history, I want to try to offer you a framework for thinking more about partnerships, and then pose some questions about the future. Please forgive me if I generalize a bit in the interest of simplicity.

Even though it is not much talked about, *raising student achievement* is supposed to be the point of all this.

Three Waves

Let me suggest that there have been three waves of partnership activity.

The *first wave* generally was *student* focused, primarily on minority and poor students. Early first-wave programs mainly targeted high-school-aged students. Most were thinly disguised recruitment devices; they were collaborative only where necessary (in fact, schools often refused broader assistance); and most were hit-or-miss, providing services to youngsters only sporadically.

Later first-wave programs were more sophisticated and more analytic. Colleges moved deeper into the system, focusing on younger students. The strategies they used were more carefully honed, and there was relatively more collaboration with school people.

Then, typically in the early 1980s, along came a *second wave* of partnership activity, this one focused primarily on *teachers*. Early second-wave activities were creative and wonderful — and messy. They were also rarely connected to the first wave, focusing more on "excellence" than equity.

Typically, rather than addressing instruction in a comprehensive fashion, second-wave initiatives consisted of a hodgepodge of activities — English here, math there, and so on. And there were no systematic dissemination plans — only the best teachers tended to participate.

Later programs were more strategic. They pressed onward into the system; many created dissemination mechanisms to spread practice; and they were more equal, with university faculty learning from school teachers.

In a very few places, we are now moving into what I would call a *third wave* of partnership activity, one that builds on both traditions; that pushes into institutionalization — and, indeed, into policy; and that seeks to improve student outcomes and to involve institutions more broadly.

This is, in fact, the "mainstream" activity implied in this conference's title.

What are the things to think about as we move into this third wave? There are many, but let me suggest three:

- First, the need to strengthen whole schools and districts, not just instruction in math, English, or science. This is especially important in low-performing schools serving minority students. Revitalizing and refreshing a teacher doesn't accomplish very much if that teacher is sent back into an otherwise unchanged institution. Whole schools must support quality instruction, and principals are especially important.

- Second, the urgent need for changes in teacher preparation. Far too many colleges are contributing to solving education problems via partnerships while worsening education problems by producing underprepared teachers. This has to stop. All of the graduates of our teacher-preparation programs must be able to teach effectively in today's diverse classrooms. If you don't know how to change, I suggest that you ask some of the terrific teachers in predominantly minority schools to help you retool your program.

- Third, it is important to think about why we are doing all this. What is our goal?

What Is Our Goal?

Even though it is not much talked about, *raising student achievement* is supposed to be the point of all this. Judy Lanier yesterday said it better than I: "Why have partnerships? Because we are after new learning — learning that is qualitatively and quantitatively different."

I realize that this is an uncomfortable subject for many of you. At this conference I have heard you refer to student achievement as a "by-product" of your efforts and say repeatedly that "our aim is teacher morale, not student achievement." It was even worse at last month's meeting of the American Educational Research Association, where university faculty members talked about judging their results by whether they "harmed" achievement rates.

But as uncomfortable as talking achievement results is to you, let me remind you how uncomfortable your unwillingness to talk about them makes others in this achievement-oriented society. Remember, if you will, what the two corporate giants said to Judy Lanier: "You'd better get moving or we *will* create and franchise ninety-day-wonder training programs." And remember what John Porter said this morning and what Al Bennett said yesterday: "We just can't afford anything that doesn't improve student achievement."

Partnerships can't simply be an end in themselves, nor can intermediate products such as improved teacher morale, increased knowledge of schools on the part of postsecondary faculty, and so on. The end of all this simply must be improved achievement, especially among minority and poor students.

The Crisis of Children

I feel a special sense of urgency about all of this because of the time I spend in cities and towns across this country — and the contrast between what I see there and what I know we need as a nation.

As all of you know, the number of children — soon to be young adults — in our society is dwindling. In the year 2000, there will be 5.4 million fewer Americans between the ages 18 and 24 than in 1980. As the percentage of children and young workers in our population shrinks, we will need to prepare each of our young people — minority and white, poor and rich — to be fully productive, if our nation is to thrive.

Our ability to compete, much less innovate and lead in the twenty-first century, however, is being subverted by the intolerable conditions we are inflicting on those

whom we will need to be our workers, parents, innovators, and leaders. Consider this:

- One in five American children — 12 million in all — is living in poverty. Children are by far the poorest Americans and have grown poorer during the 1980s as our nation has grown richer.

- One in five children has no health insurance. Among industrialized nations, only the United States and South Africa fail to provide all children and families a basic floor of health protection.

- The fastest-growing segment of the homeless population is families with children, yet federal housing appropriations were cut 80 percent in the 1980s.

- Children are safer in Northern Ireland than in America. Each day 135,000 American children take a gun to school. Some inner-city children are exposed to violence so routinely that they exhibit posttraumatic stress symptoms similar to those of Vietnam veterans.

- Every day in America, 69 babies die before one month of life, 107 die before their first birthday; 27 children die from poverty, 9 die from guns, 1,849 are abused, and 3,288 run away from home; 1,293 teenagers give birth, and 1,375 drop out of high school.

We cannot continue to neglect our most vulnerable citizens and our economic and moral underpinnings. We can't continue, as Judy Lanier said yesterday, to "eat our seed corn" by ignoring the basic health, shelter, and nutrition needs of the poor, or by warehousing children in intellectually deadening schools.

Schools Without Challenge

Far, far too few minority and poor children are getting an education with any real challenge these days. Instead, they often spend their days in boring classrooms, circling *m*'s and *p*'s on dittos — ditto, after ditto, after ditto.

In fact — though no one likes to talk about this very much, because it flies in the face of everything we like to believe about our society — minority and poor children get less of everything we believe makes a difference:

- less in the way of experienced and well-trained teachers;
- less in the way of a rich and well-balanced curriculum;
- less actual instruction time;
- less in the way of well-equipped and well-stocked laboratories and libraries; and
- less of what undoubtedly is most important of all — a belief that they can really learn.

Though no one likes to talk about this very much, minority and poor children get less of everything we believe makes a difference.

How does this happen? Primarily in two ways: differences between the schools that serve minority and poor children and those that serve other children; and differences, within schools, between "high" and "low" tracks.

In the first case, as Gary Orfield told you this morning, most minority students in America are still educated separately from other students. And their schools tend to get the least-trained teachers and the lowest-level curricular materials. Everything is watered down.

For youngsters who we don't manage to get in this way, we have another practice, called *grouping* and *tracking,* and it has essentially the same effect. In general, we herd poor and minority students into low-track classes, where we assign them the worst teachers and the oldest books, and then expect essentially nothing from them.

It's hardly surprising, then, that minority and poor students do less well than other students on tests of academic achievement: the fact is that we teach them less.

As if all of this weren't enough, some communities have less of others things, too:

- less knowledge about how schools work;
- fewer skills to help with homework;
- less flexible time to visit schools;
- fewer resources to pay for educational extras; and
- fewer hopes and dreams for children all-too-often overwhelmed by the day-to-day business of survival.

The combination of these two "lesses" — in our schools and in our communities — is simply devastating for poor and minority youngsters.

So What Can We Do?

One of the most corrosive developments of the 1980s was the propagation of the belief that nothing works and that we can't make a difference — that all efforts to ameliorate problems fail, that public service is an unworthy calling, and that we should all withdraw from engagement in public life and lead our lives in ever-smaller circles.

It is as though our entire nation has been put in one of those spirit-squelching, hope-destroying schools in which we bury so many students. Told that in public life we did not have the ability to perform, we stopped trying. Told that as a nation we could not achieve social reform, we gave up the effort. These teachings poisoned public life and contributed to the widespread despair about mending this nation's social fabric.

The lessons taught in this national schoolroom of the 1980s were wrong. Our nation has made real gains when it has paid attention to how we as individuals, as well as how we collectively through government, can help families and communities.

We must let our colleagues and our political leaders know that some things *do* work; that early investment is cheaper than ignorance, unemployment, and dependency. That schools with strong leadership, a demanding curriculum, and caring staff absolutely can raise achievement levels. That, when we as a society tried, we effected real reductions in infant mortality, low birthweight, childhood illness, and school dropouts — and we achieved real increases in achievement, college attendance, health status, and longevity.

We must also reject the despair that comes from a false belief that our society does not have the resources to solve its problems. There is a widespread sense that America is poorer than it was ten or twenty years ago and cannot afford any major public undertaking. This is nonsense. We do not lack the resources. America's total gross national product is by far the largest in the world. But, although our GNP is the largest and our per-capita GNP the second largest, we are not even in the top ten on key indicators of our care for children: in preventing infant mortality, in immunizing against polio, in child/teacher ratios, in math achievement, in preventing teen pregnancy. We can afford to invest in children; and if we don't, we'll pay a far higher price later on.

A Critical Role for Partnerships

There is, in my judgment, no agenda more important to the future of this country than improving the educational system. Though other systems — health, child welfare, and so on — touch some of our children, and therefore our future, the educational system is the only one that touches all of them. It is also the only device we have that is capable of equipping students with the knowledge and skills they need and that we need them to have.

But the system, K-16, is not doing that effectively now, especially among our large, growing population of minority and poor students. Despite what Carmen Terrazas said yesterday, in most places the system *is* broken and *does* need big changes.

To bring that change about — both to deliver the collective shove necessary to get the educational system rolling and to provide the support to keep it rolling — will require enormous effort from all of us. It will require people coming together around a set of goals and figuring out how to reach them.

That, in the end, is what partnerships are all about. Through these very flexible vehicles we can unleash the creativity and harness the energy that normal institutional relationships can crush. Through these vehicles, we can make from two systems (in most places we actually have four systems — elementary, junior high, senior high, postsecondary — with huge gaps between each) the single continuum that I believe we all acknowledge needs to exist.

But, to accomplish this and to affect student outcomes more broadly, we need to press ahead into the third wave of collaboration I talked about earlier. We need to do what Alison Bernstein said this morning: look beyond our own pet projects to devising a strategy for systematizing teaching excellence, K-16.

As we proceed, we need to focus our attention on the biggest questions and to think ahead of even our anointed leaders. For example:

- Why can't we go beyond David Hamburg's suggestion that every *college* have a "substantive, functional linkage with local schools in its area," and instead assure that every *school* has such a linkage?

- Why can't we use the very best teachers from predominantly minority schools to advance our understanding of how to teach in diverse classrooms, and design teacher-education programs that, as Vinetta Jones suggested, equip *all* new teachers with strategies and visions for success with all learners, rather than with "rationales for failure"?

- Why can't we do what John Porter asked, and devise a plan to assure that *all* (rather than just a few) of the urban teachers who need help have a chance for thorough retraining?

Sure this takes time. But, as Judy Lanier said yesterday, we know enough from the past two decades of work to speed it up. Let's do that but always, always keep our eyes on the prize of improved achievement.

Moving Forward

To move partnerships this far forward will be a lot of work. Many of you have given your all for kids for decades, and here I stand asking you to do more.

I do this for a simple reason: I have visited the neonatal intensive care wards, and the early-intervention preschool programs. I have walked our city streets. I have seen the future, and I am scared.

Is it fair that you should be the first line of defense — or the offense, for that matter — against this kind of a future? No, it is not. If ours were a just society, you would be joined by a veritable army of health care professionals, business leaders, social service workers, political leaders, and many, many others. But, at the moment, you are the first line for many youngsters.

We need to ... look beyond our own pet projects to devising a strategy for systematizing teaching excellence, K-16.

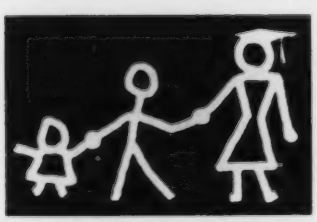
So you and I are going to have to form an army of our own — an army for children. We're going to have to dig a bit deeper within ourselves for strength — and bring in our friends and colleagues — until such time as no child's needs go unmet.

I hope you will join in this effort. We need your help. More important, America's children need your help. No one is more important to our children's future — and the future of this country — than you who hold in your hands the keys to improving our educational system. ■

Overcoming Barriers To Change

by Phyllis Hart

Presented at AAHE's Second National Conference on School/College Collaboration, June 23-26, 1991, Atlanta, Georgia.



Phyllis Hart is manager of school services for the Los Angeles Unified School District, The Achievement Council, and the Center for Academic Interinstitutional Programs at UCLA. She is also project director for the College Board initiative "Strengthening Educational Guidance and Counseling in Schools." Previously, she was a teacher and counselor at Banning High School for eighteen years.

I'd like to describe a change process that occurred at Banning High School in the Los Angeles Unified School District, where I worked for eighteen years as both a teacher and a counselor. The Banning High School story demonstrates that systemic change is possible and offers some lessons for those of us who are trying to bring it about.

In schools across the nation, large numbers of students lack access to educational opportunities, such as the opportunity to enroll in a rigorous precollege curriculum, to learn about colleges, to attain eligibility for college admissions. Common policies and practices such as tracking create stratification by race and by income. When we try to open up the system, to restore equity to the schools, we are talking about changing entrenched systems. It can't be done incrementally; it requires a change in vision, philosophy, policies, practice. This is what we did at Banning High School.

When we try to open up the system, to restore equity to the schools, we are talking about changing entrenched systems.

Banning High School enrolls about 3,000 students in grades 10 through 12. The student body is 92 percent African American, Latino, Filipino, and Native American; about 8 percent of the students are white. The community is a blue-collar, working-class community where parents hoped their children would finish high school and get a good job. Although they wanted good things for their children, they didn't know much about higher education because most of them never graduated from high school. Banning High never had a strong academic program, and few students went on to college.

A Bad First Year

In 1975, after I'd been a teacher at Banning for six years, I was asked to take over as the college counselor. The principal told me that because there weren't many

students who had the ability to go to college, this new role would not take much of my time. He thought I could continue to teach two or three periods a day and also be the college counselor to about 300 students. In my naivete I agreed.

After just one year I had learned a great deal, and I'd like to share some of these lessons with you because they highlight issues that need to be addressed in American public education.

By the end of my first year as college counselor, I was very frustrated and distressed. We sent few students on to higher education, particularly to four-year colleges or universities. Some of those who did go to college came back to visit, and they shared a disturbing picture. These students reminded us that they had graduated in the top 5 percent of their class, with grade-point averages over 3.5. Yet when they started college, they suddenly found themselves in classes with students who obviously knew a whole lot more than they did. They were hearing about authors like Faulkner and Tolstoy, concepts like existentialism, and they didn't have a clue what the professor was talking about. They looked around and saw their peers writing in their notebooks, and they realized that they had to play catch-up.

When these students came back to Banning, they were bitter because they felt they had been sold a bill of goods, a watered-down curriculum and lowered expectations. And they were right.

A second group of students who came in to see me were seniors who wanted to apply to college. Many of them had high aspirations and wanted to be engineers, architects, doctors. I looked at their transcripts, and I found myself in the very uncomfortable position of having to tell them, "Well, you didn't take algebra. You didn't take chemistry. These are the courses you need for college, so you're going to have to begin at a community college."

Again, I saw the look of devastation on the students' faces as they learned they could not begin immediately to pursue their dreams. They felt betrayed, that if they'd just taken the right courses, certainly they would have had the option to do what they wanted.

I call the third group of students the "silent" group, because they were the students who never came in to see me at all. I can only believe that the reason they didn't

was because they didn't view themselves as college bound. This group was the largest.

After this first, frustrating year I went home and thought about it over the summer. I decided, "Either I have to get out of this school or I have to be about changing what's happening to these kids." I simply could not in good conscience continue to support a system that sent so few students to college and disappointed so many others.

Now, some people might disagree; they would contend that not all students need to go to college. So why were Banning's low rates of college admission so distressing to me? The answer is that I believe all students deserve the chance to achieve at the highest levels and to have the option to go on to higher education, and to do so successfully. Also, we all know that business and industry want students who can compute, who can think, who can work as a team, who are critical thinkers and problem solvers. The economy requires increasing levels of skills and abilities from the work force. If all students were getting that kind of preparation in our high schools today, I wouldn't worry so much. But unfortunately, they are not, and I know that students in college-prep classes will get the preparation they need not only for college but also for work and for life.

A Climate for Change

After thinking over my situation, I went back to my principal and said, "I need to talk with you about my first year's experience." Because Banning was extremely well known for athletics, the principal always met with the coaches in the morning to find out what the plays were going to be for Friday night's game. As I said I wanted to speak with him, he got up from his chair and said, "Why don't we walk together." So I had about the time it took us to walk from the main office over to the cafeteria to discuss what my experience had been that first year.

During this initial meeting, he basically brushed off my concerns. He said that only about 5 percent of the students at the school had the ability to go on to college, and that I was doing an excellent job.

At this point, I turned to my colleagues.

Some of them said, "You're right, but what can you do? You can't change a whole school." Others offered excuses, "What do you expect from these kids? They're poor. Many live in gang-infested neighborhoods with drugs. They don't do the work, many are behind in skills. Their parents don't care and don't come out to school." These were all offered as reasons why these kids could not go on to higher education.

But I found one teacher and one other counselor who were as appalled as I was, and we sat down together to come up with a strategy for bringing about change.

We decided to begin by creating the political climate for change. So we went to a few parents whom we knew. Some of them were parents of students who had gone to college but had not done well because they were underprepared. We talked with these parents about what kinds of questions they might raise with the principal, and they made an appointment with him. As you and I know, principals pay more attention and respond more quickly when parents go into their office and ask the uncomfortable questions.

Needless to say, the principal was very angry with us after the parents met with him and raised these issues. But then he turned around and said we needed to meet. So we began to meet on a weekly basis, and we quickly came up with a plan that we thought would work.

Our Vision and Plan

Our group of three came up with our own vision of what we thought the school should look like, and we came up with a plan to make it happen. Our vision was based on our belief that all students have the capacity to go on to higher education. We imagined a school that wholeheartedly believed in every student's capacity to learn and that provided the structure and support to make that learning happen.

The first part of our plan was to get to kids much earlier, before they even arrived in high school, and to help them make educated choices about what they wanted to do with their lives. The second part of the plan was to clean our own house, and that meant beefing up the curriculum, raising expectations, and improving instruction. Once students said, "I would like to go to college," we needed to make sure they would be given a challenging, rigorous curriculum with high expectations

— but expectations as an opportunity not to fail students but to provide support to help them through the system.

We imagined a school that wholeheartedly believed in every student's capacity to learn.

Early Contact

We began with our four feeder junior high schools. Despite some resistance, we managed to get permission to go into each junior high school and speak directly with all its students. We went into all the classes, whether they were labeled "honors," "regular," "remedial," "ESL," whatever. And that was, again, a very eye-opening experience for me. When the junior high teachers learned we were going to talk about college, many of them said, "Why are you going to bother with these kids? They're not going anywhere" or "Why talk to this class? They'll be lucky to finish high school." But we just told them it was our time, and that if we wanted to spend it speaking about college, that was our choice.

When I went into these classes, I knew that I'd lose the attention of 90 percent of the students if I started by writing the requirements for getting into college on the board. Instead, I began by asking them a question: "Who goes to college?" The responses I got then were the same responses I get today from students with similar backgrounds attending similar schools.

One of the things students invariably said is, "You can go to college if you're rich, if your parents are wealthy." The second thing they said is, "You have to be smart." And when I asked the kids how we could figure out who was smart, they would point down the hall to another room and say, "The kids down there with Mrs. Jones" or "Room 105." They had already figured out that the kids from elementary school who had been in the "bluebird" group were the smart kids who would most likely go to college, and the others who were in the "redbird" group or the "buzzards" weren't.

I would reply, "You mean that only one group of kids in this entire school is going to be able to go to college?" And they would say, "Well, maybe if you had all *A*'s on your report card, then the teacher or a counselor might talk to you about college." They also said that you could tell who's smart by test scores. They said, "The school gives tests, and if you get a high score, someone will call you in and talk to you about college."

Already, by junior high, these students were carrying around a whole mythology about who went to college, and most had eliminated themselves from thinking that they could be part of the college-going groups.

I then tried a second exercise. I asked the students to write down the answers to two questions: "What kind of career do you see yourself having when you finish school?" and "Are you going to college?" When they were through, I collected their answers, and as I read off all the careers they had listed, I stacked up the slips according to whether they required a college education. In almost every class, about three fourths of the students were choosing careers that would require higher education, and yet their answer to my second question was typically *no*, they were not going to college.

I told them that if they were serious about going into these careers, then they needed to rethink whether or not they were going to college. By the way, they were fascinated to learn that their teachers had gone to college! The point is, even though we give students information all the time in writing, and we think we are telling them about college, they are not receiving the information in a way that translates into a personal plan for their lives.

Then I began to deal with the myths about who goes to college. I talked about financial aid and scholarships. I talked about who really does go to college, what it really takes to make it through. I explained that college was not just for "those kids down the hall" but for them, as well. I also said that if they wanted to go on to higher education, they would have to make a commitment to do the kind of homework that was necessary, to turn off the television, and to take certain classes.

At this point, we handed out a very simple application form. All the students had to do was write their name, their class, and say, "Yes, I want to be part of a new program at the high school called the College Core Program." What would this

program consist of? They would take certain classes to prepare for college, such as algebra, geometry, biology, foreign language, college-preparatory English. And I told them we would not just leave them hanging out to dry, that we would be there and support them along the way if they needed help.

Open Access

One of the most important aspects of the program is that we did not eliminate any students on the basis of their standardized test scores or grades, and we let the students' teachers and counselors see the enrollment lists only to add names, not to delete any. We had an open-access philosophy, so that every single student who said, "I want college to be part of my future" was put into college-preparatory courses at the high school. This is essential — as I visit schools across the country, I find long series of roadblocks and hurdles that keep students out of college-prep courses.

It's fascinating to me that we'll take a student with a fifth-grade reading ability and put him in a shop class to learn the hydraulic system, but we won't put him in a biology class to learn the circulatory system. It's interesting also to look at which students are exposed to which curricula. For example, we typically restrict Shakespearean courses to the top students only, but the plays originally were written for people with less formal education than the students we now exclude.

In that first year, about 200 of the 1,200 incoming students signed up for our program, in contrast with about 30 students in one class labeled "honors" in past years. The rest of the students were placed in "regular" or "remedial" classes.

It really took a lot that first year to get the students to take that first step and say, "I'm going to trust you, and I'm going to take this program even though it scares me." Often when kids say *no,* they really mean that they're afraid, so we had to coach them and support those who were shying away.

College Core Program

Now, what did we do back at our own school? Despite his initial anger, our principal agreed to let us organize a group of six teachers who would be part of a new enterprise called the College Core Program. We approached the teachers we knew would go the distance for kids — and they weren't always the department chairs or the senior members of the department, so there were some politics here. And the principal did take the heat for choosing the teachers we wanted.

When those 200 students entered Banning High, they were enrolled in English classes, algebra, geometry, and foreign languages — all the courses were labeled College Core so that the message would be there for the teachers, the counselors, the parents, and the students. The students signed a contract saying, "Yes, I agree to take these courses. I agree to do the homework, turn off the television, keep up with my grades, and keep up with college requirements." We also asked their parent or guardian to sign the contract.

The contract became an excellent counseling tool when students became scared or when they found a class difficult and wanted to run away. You could pull out the contract and say, "Have you changed your mind about being a lawyer?" And more often than not, the kids didn't want to back off from their commitment, so we would talk to them about what help they needed to do a better job in the course. We would also explain the educational consequences if they dropped the course. In education, we often take the easier route and let kids drop out of courses, but they don't always realize what implications this can have for their future.

Changing Behaviors

Just by virtue of being in the College Core Program, did behaviors change overnight? Did these kids do their homework every night right from the start? No, they did not. I can still remember getting a call from an English teacher who said, "Phyllis, I thought you told me these kids were going to college." And I said, "They are." She said, "I can't understand, then, why half of them didn't do the homework last night."

So I went down to that classroom and said to the students, "How many of you are going to college?" One hundred percent raised their hands. I then said, "How many of you did your homework last night?" They looked around kind of sheepishly, but since their teacher was standing right there, they had to be honest, and about half of them raised their hands.

And I said, "This is confusing me. Just as in junior high you told me you were going to go into these careers without going to college, now you're telling me you're not going to do your homework. These are not college-bound behaviors. This is not what's expected. You must change what you are doing on a daily basis if you are going

to realize your dreams. If you're having difficulty in the course, that's one issue, and we'll help you. But if it's a matter of changing your own behaviors, we expect you to do that, and I will come back in here every day until I see 100 percent of you raise your hands."

I think too often we give up on kids and decide that if they didn't do their assignment, they weren't serious or they're not college-bound material and should leave the class. But sometimes the kids can be reluctant clients. Even though we think we're doing all these wonderful things with them about going to college, it doesn't always translate into what a student needs to do. And I think sometimes they test us to see whether we're going to pull them out of the program. Or perhaps they don't really believe they're smart, so they do all these negative things so they can get kicked out of the program and not have to worry about whether they can be successful.

Systemic change is not an add-on program or an add-on set of resources. It is a difference in philosophy.

Another example of how we had to help students change behaviors occurred in the second year, when we put the word out for students to take the PSAT. I knew that the original group of 200 juniors should have signed up, as well as about 250 sophomores who were now in the program. But a week before the test, only 40 students had registered for the exam. I went back to the students and I again asked, "How many of you are going to college?" and again they all raised their hands. Then I said, "How many of you have signed up to take the PSAT?" and I heard whispering around the room. They didn't know that I was talking about. Some thought I was talking about the PTA! They had not heard, even though I thought I had delivered the message, why they should take the PSAT or even what it was. So I had to go class by class again, explaining this new acronym. There was also a lot of fear attached to taking the test, because the students were afraid that the colleges would stare at their PSAT scores and decide that they were not capable of going on. We had to address their fears.

As the program continued, we learned to listen to the students themselves to better understand what was working and what needed improvement in the College Core program. For example, we found that the students needed a support system, so we developed a tutorial program to help them as they moved on to more advanced courses, such as chemistry and Algebra II. At first, we found it was very difficult to get kids to sign up. When we asked the students what was going on, they told us that the word "tutoring" implied a deficiency and suggested that you weren't too bright. So we changed the name to "study group," and we mixed kids together to avoid sending a message that some kids were bright and others were stupid. And the kids showed up. Sometimes we get our best answers from the students.

Improving Instruction

We also began to work with their teachers on cooperative learning, other methods of delivering math besides the traditional lock-step, chalk-and-talk approaches. Our math teachers went over to Garfield High School, which had a great math program, and came back with new ideas about how to teach. They were excited because they owned the solution, and they changed their teaching philosophy and practices with great success.

To learn more about their successes and failures, they conducted a study, and they found that the students who failed also showed the highest rates of absenteeism. So they decided to address that problem by calling the students the very first day they were absent and saying, "Jose, I missed you today. I hope you come in tomorrow, and I'll be glad to help you make up the work." The students were shocked to get a call from their teachers. We began to see attendance patterns change, and we began to see more kids making it through the mathematics pipeline. Eventually, we even filled an AP calculus class — the first time ever for Banning High School.

Before the College Core Program began, Banning offered only one advanced-placement class. Once the program was started, however, we quickly increased the advanced-placement offerings, and in this way the curriculum began to change. As the students moved up the grade levels, we began to offer courses that had never been offered at Banning before, such as physics and calculus. By the time the first cohort of students were seniors, we had twelve AP courses. We offered open access to advanced placement, rather than a bunch of prerequisites to decide who could be in those courses.

These curricular changes were the first evidence of systemic change in Banning High. Systemic change is not an add-on program or an add-on set of resources. It is a difference in philosophy, and when that philosophy changes, the institution begins to change.

Institutionalized Success

1980 marked the first graduating class from the College Core Program. Just a few weeks ago, the twelfth class in the College Core program graduated.

It's interesting to note that I have been away from the school for about four and a half years now. My point is that the program is now institutionalized and no longer relies on an individual person to make sure it's going to work. Once people began to see that Latinos and African Americans and Filipinos and Native Americans and poor kids could learn, they jumped on the bandwagon and decided to keep the program alive themselves.

Within a few years, the College Core Program grew to include 1,100 students — one third of the student body — with more than sixty participating teachers. The program has been successful in increasing the number of students from Banning attending and succeeding in college. But as a catalyst for systemic change, it's had other positive effects, as well, that I'd like to tell you about.

The California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) conducted a study on Banning High School. The results showed that more students from Banning were preparing for college by taking exams such as the PSAT and SAT, more were applying, and, of course, more were being accepted. Students were attending not only the local California State campuses but also major universities such as the University of California, Princeton, Wellesley, and Stanford. And the CPEC study indicated that once these students entered college, they were able to persist to graduation. The gap between their grades in high school and their grades in college had narrowed, and they were succeeding at higher levels. Furthermore, the students were not avoiding the more difficult math and science courses — they were enrolled in very rigorous programs in some of the country's top institutions, and they were doing very well.

Only about 10 percent of College Core students leave the program before finishing high school; the vast majority of these students stay in high school but leave the program to take easier courses. Often, however, they re-enter the program, because they find the other courses too boring.

We found that teachers were transferring to Banning High School from other schools, where they were tired of delivering a watered-down curriculum. We were now getting teachers who had majored in mathematics and physics. They were great additions to our staff.

Money was an obvious barrier to entering college for our students. We had to chase them down to get them to fill out financial aid forms. Over a five-year period, the amount of financial aid and scholarships provided to Banning High School students rose from about $500,000 to $2.8 million.

Community support for athletics at Banning High School had always been present, since the school had a great reputation for sports. Parents and community members participated in booster clubs, donated funds for uniforms and awards, and attended special events and ceremonies. Now, however, we began to gain community support for academics too, and we organized an Academic Booster Club. Community members volunteered funds to pay some of the tutors who were helping kids and to buy awards for high achievers. Every year now, Banning sponsors a College Night to honor the students from the College Core Program, and the auditorium is packed with family members. The seniors who have done well receive an academic jacket that says "Academic Excellence, Banning High School," with their name on it. Their parent or a significant adult in the family stands with the child and gets a certificate for outstanding parenting, emphasizing the importance of family support for education. It's a very warm and moving ceremony.

Was It Worth the Struggle?

I'd like to end with a question I've been asked many times: Was it worth the struggle? Was it worth dealing with the politics? Was it worth all of the extra, hard work that you had to put into it?

My answer is *yes*.

Students' lives are now different because we were able to change a system that was not working for kids. I'd like to highlight just a few of those kids, and I'm sure you'll all think of students like them in your own systems.

Students' lives are now different because we were able to change a system that was not working for kids.

Manuel

Manuel's parents are farm workers with no more than a third-grade education. He was enrolled in ESL classes in junior high school, but when he signed up for the College Core Program, he just took off academically. By the time he was a senior, he was taking five advanced-placement courses, and he received a score of 5 on each of the exams. He entered Occidental College as a sophomore. I remember getting a letter from a college professor — in calculus, no less — who said, "Thank you for sending us Manuel. In seventeen years of teaching, I've never had a finer student." Without the College Core Program, this student would not have gone to college. He is now an engineer and has finished not only Occidental College but also graduate work at Stanford University.

Lisa

The second student, Lisa, came from an abusive home. She had no parental support and was tossed back and forth from place to place. In her senior year, she and two other Chicanas met with a Wellesley representative, and all eventually graduated from Wellesley. Before she left for college, Lisa told me, "When you came to the junior high and talked to us about going to college, I felt pushed to sign that contract. I never really believed that I was bright until this year, as a senior, after we read a novel in AP English. When we finished reading the novel and writing the paper, and I got a good grade and good comments, I looked back at the book and saw stamped there 'For gifted students only.' It was at that moment I realized I could do the work."

Walter

When I think of what is happening to African American males in this country, I think of Walter. He was the kind of guy for whom football was the highest priority, and schoolwork came much further down the list. Walter signed up for the College Core program because he wanted to attend UC Berkeley, but he also wanted to play high school football. He asked to take the minimum number of college-prep courses — just enough to be admitted to college. I knew that if he continued on this road, he might get admitted to Berkeley but probably wouldn't finish, so I talked with his parents and we conspired. We decided that it would be a good experience for Walter to go to a prep school in the summer to experience a challenging academic program. He was accepted to the summer session at Andover with a scholarship. After one grueling summer, he came home a convert and said, "Put me in those AP classes. If this is anything like Berkeley, I'd better do more than the minimum."

Walter was admitted to Berkeley as a special-action student. When he left for college, I told him, as I told all my students, "Remember to send me your college graduation announcement, because I do expect you to graduate." I can still remember receiving Walter's graduation announcement, and I've since found out that he went on to medical school and will soon be finishing.

Lolita

The first African American student we sent to Princeton was a young woman named Lolita. She was the kind of student teachers either loved or hated to have in their class — she challenged them often and asked lots of questions. When the Princeton representative came to campus, I summoned Lolita, thinking she would be the perfect candidate. After she applied to a number of colleges and was accepted to all of them, she did indeed choose Princeton. At about this time, I took a semester's sabbatical and went East to visit college campuses to see how our students were faring. When I arrived at Princeton, I visited Lolita and asked her how she was doing. She replied, "You have to keep your sense of humor here," and she told me this story:

> "The other day, I went to a tea given by the Class of 1932, and they asked us how it was that we ended up at Princeton. The first student said that her father was a Yale graduate and her mother was a Princeton graduate, so her parents argued from the time she was a child about where she should go, and her choice of Princeton caused a big family conflict. The second student pointed to a dining hall down the way and announced that it had been named after

his great-grandfather, so he had always known he would go to Princeton. When it was my turn, I told them that to be very honest, I hadn't even heard of Princeton until my senior year in high school. Those ladies were in shock. Their teacups rattled in their saucers."

Not surprisingly, Lolita has since graduated from Princeton. She went to law school and is now an attorney. I keep her phone number close by.

Debra

The last student I'd like to tell you about is the kind that frustrates us the most. Debra had about two thousand conferences with me during her three years at Banning, and every time the issue was the same — Debra was not doing her homework and was receiving *D*'s and *F*s on her report card. Each time, she would promise to do better. "I promise tonight I'll do all my homework and read those novels, . . ." but she rarely followed through. Although she wanted to stay in the College Core Program, I had to remind Debra that she was reducing her options to go to college, and that she might not even graduate from high school on time.

Years later, I ran into Debra at a conference, and she came over and gave me a big hug. She thanked me for never giving up on her and told me that homework had never been on her "Top 10" list during high school. Then she reminded me of our last counseling session, where I pulled out her grade-point average of 1.6 and told her that her only option was to go to the community college. Then she said, "You probably don't know what has happened since then. I went to community college, grew up a lot, and decided to study. I transferred to Cal State Long Beach, graduated with honors, and now I'm at UC Irvine, working with junior high school students just like I was to help them believe they can go to college, too."

What this taught me as an educator is this: Never give up on a child, because that flashpoint when their life will turn around can come at any time — five, ten, twenty years after high school, or even later.

As you leave this conference, I ask you to think about what you can do to change the schools and increase the educational options for students. We must challenge the status quo and open the doors of access. If change is going to occur, however,

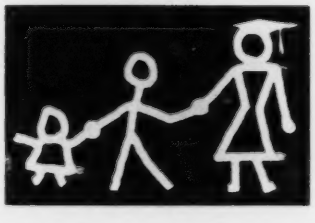
we must have the will to make it happen. We will not close the achievement gap in this country unless we are willing to take a stand and to take steps to change a system that is not working for kids.

I know you believe, as I do, that education is the ticket to the fulfillment of hopes and dreams. Let's make sure all our children get first-class tickets. ■

School Success For Black Students: Partnerships With Shared Visions And Common Agendas

by Jacqueline Jordan Irvine

Presented at AAHE's Second National Conference on School/College Collaboration, June 23-26, 1991, Atlanta, Georgia.



Jacqueline Jordan Irvine is a professor in the Division of Education Studies at Emory University in Atlanta. She has authored more than thirty publications, including her award-winning book Black Students and School Failure.

My topic, "School Success for Black Students: Partnerships With Shared Visions and Common Agendas," reminded me of a conversation I recently had with a nine-year-old black male. While at church, I had inadvertently locked my keys in my car, and I was sitting on the church steps waiting for the locksmith. My church, located in an inner-city poverty neighborhood in Atlanta, is across the street from The Boy's Club. This curious young man spotted me and jumped on his bike to get a closer look.

Unless primary, secondary, and higher education programs collaborate to make significant reforms, this entire country, as well as minority children, will be "at risk."

After minutes of persuading him that he did not have to break into my car to retrieve my keys, my newly made friend, Darius, sat down to talk. I asked him the usual questions adults ask children: Where do you go to school? What's your teacher's name? What do you want to be when you grow up? After responding quickly to the first two questions, he stalled on the third, and responded, "I don't wanna be nothing." "Oh, come on," I said. "There are so many wonderful and exciting things to dream about being — a teacher, an astronaut, a businessman, mechanic, policeman, fireman. Just close your eyes and let me know what you see yourself doing when you get to be all grown up."

Darius hesitantly followed my directions. He closed his eyes, folded his arms over his chest, and lifted his head toward the sky as if he needed divine inspiration for such a difficult task. After fifteen seconds of what appeared to be a very painful exercise, I interrupted Darius's concentration. "What do you see?" I asked impatiently. The young boy mumbled, "Lady, I don't see nothing."

Sometimes educators forget that children, like Darius, "don't see nothing" when we ask them to dream and envision the future. These kids are what Jonathan Kozol calls "throwaway kids." Others call them "at risk," "disadvantaged," "deprived,"

"the underclass." Educators label them with more polysyllabic, psychological terms like "behavioral disorder," "developmentally immature," "product of a dysfunctional home environment," "attention deficit." New terms for an old problem — students who are not white, middle class, or from a traditional family and who present a challenge to the profession. Historical data remind us that these kinds of children have always been among us. For example, in 1908, 19 percent of American-born children were labeled "retarded," whereas 23 percent of Russian, 24 percent of English, 29 percent of Irish, and 36 percent of Italian children were similarly labeled. These immigrant children, unlike earlier immigrants, were different by virtue of social class, culture, and values. School officials called these at-risk children "laggards" and "misfits."

The practice of labeling children who are different, those who don't or won't fit into our mold, has a long-standing tradition in American education. The laggards and misfits of today are truants, students who have been retained and will eventually drop out, students who misbehave, pregnant teenage students, students who have limited language proficiency, immigrant students — now not from northern Europe or southern Europe but from places such as Mexico, Vietnam, Laos, the Caribbean — they are African American kids like Darius who try but cannot dream and envisage the future.

The demographic data for the rest of this century are clear and convincing. By the year 2020, one third of all children will be from a minority group. As you know, the states of California, Texas, Florida, and New York will soon have "majority minorities." Minority students already represent the majority of the student population in twenty-five of this nation's largest school districts.

These data challenge us to dramatically change in three areas:

- how we administer schools and instruct elementary and secondary students;
- how we recruit and instruct college students; and
- how we will maintain our status as a leading competitor in the world market.

Unless primary, secondary, and higher education programs collaborate to make significant reforms, this entire country, as well as minority children, will be "at risk."

My presentation today focuses on factors related to the school failure of one minority student group — black, or African American, students — and suggestions as to how institutions of higher education can form effective partnerships to reverse that cycle of failure. African American students are of particular interest to me, for obvious reasons. They also represent the most challenging group of students to the profession.

The failure of African American students to achieve in America's schools is well documented and familiar to all of you. What is warranted is an examination of present explanations for these students' failure. Frequently cited reasons for these students' lack of achievement include poverty and deprivation (Coleman 1966), negative teacher expectations (Irvine 1990), lack of parental involvement (Clark 1983), segregated schools (Camburn 1990, Hawley 1989, Rist 1985), and irrelevant Eurocentric school curricula (Asante 1988, Viadero 1990). In addition to these explanations, there is a synoptic perspective for black students' school failure that focuses on culture.

Culture

Culture is the sum total of ways of living (Hoopes and Pusch 1979), a way of life that is shared by members of a population (Ogbu 1988). Culture includes rites and rituals, legends and myths, artifacts and symbols, language and history, as well as "sense-making devices that guide and shape behavior" (Davis 1984, p. 10). According to Owens (1987), culture is what one thinks is important (values); what one thinks is true (beliefs); and how one perceives how things are done (norms).

The culture of minority students, or their "way of life" (Ogbu 1988), is often incongruous with white, middle-class cultural norms and behaviors of our schools. The differences result in cultural discontinuity, or lack of cultural synchronization, between the student and the school (Irvine 1990).

What happens to minority students when their culture is rejected or when they perceive that the school setting is hostile? When there is a cultural mismatch or cultural incompatibility between students and their school, the inevitable occurs — miscommunication; confrontations between the student, the teacher, and the home; hostility; alienation; diminished self-esteem; and eventually school failure (Irvine 1990).

The following are some examples of how lack of cultural synchronization affects black students' school achievement:

- *Issues related to minority students' style of personal presentation.* For example, black students' (particularly black urban males') language, interactions with the opposite sex, music, style of walking, glances, and dress engender fear, apprehension, and overreaction from many teachers and school administrators. Unfortunately, haircuts, hats, sunglasses, athletic shoes, starter jackets, sexual prowess, and gold jewelry are all status symbols that black teens use to express their self-worth in a world that consistently provides messages about their powerlessness and inferiority.

- *Issues related to minority students' nonverbal and verbal communication styles.* Black students' verbal boasting and teasing rituals unnerve school personnel, especially white teachers, who fail to understand that these contests of words are important male rituals in the black community. The students' defiant nonverbal acts, such as rolling eyes, "stylized sulking" (Gilmore 1985), and crossed arms, are also misinterpreted, producing unnecessary confrontation and miscuing between minority students and their teachers.

- *Issues related to minority students' language.* Language, like skin color, is an obvious characteristic and becomes a method that teachers can use to separate, label, and stereotype. Minority students who are not native English speakers, as well as African American students who speak black English, often fail in school because of this issue of language. Because black students' spoken language does not match the requirements of standard written language, successful black students must often translate to standard English before they write or speak. Teachers of these students must be, in a sense, bilingual; they should understand minority students' language and dialects so that they can first and foremost understand and communicate with their students. In addition, teachers must assist students to speak standard English, and to discover how to salvage otherwise talented minority students who fail because they have not been taught the language of the school and the workplace.

- *Issues related to minority students' cognition.* Evidence exists that minority children do not perceive the world and organize information according to classic Piagetian theory. It can be expected that these differences negatively

affect their achievement. Hilliard (in Hale-Benson 1986) posits that schools approach curriculum and instruction from an analytical versus a relational cognitive style. Black students are assumed to be relational.

This finding does not argue that all black children possess a relational style and all white children are analytical. However, when teachers use only analytical teaching methodologies and ignore other methods of instruction, they fail to capitalize on the strengths of all children's different learning modalities.

What happens to minority students when their culture is rejected or when they perceive that the school setting is hostile?

- *Issues related to tracking and homogeneous ability groups.* If there is one educational practice that seems to contribute most to the miseducation and nonachievement of minority children, it is the practice of placing students in homogeneous ability groups. Tracking is a widespread practice that results in the separation of children by race and class. This predictably results in the maintenance and reproduction of a system of social and economic stratification. Tracking appears also to be an administrative convenience: Because students have to be partitioned into smaller instructional groups, dividing them by ability, on the surface, seems to be sound educational practice. Tracking is also used as a method to attract white and middle-class parents, who are more likely to send their children to public schools if their children are segregated in advanced classes with children of similar race and class.

There is overwhelming evidence that tracking by ability has limited educational benefit for students and, in fact, is deleterious to academic achievement, extracurricular participation, self-concept development, career aspirations, and motivation of students placed in low-ability groups. There are also

convincing data that tracking is undesirable because the instructional methods used in low-ability groups are ineffective. Teachers of these students are often inexperienced and/or incompetent and use activities such as teacher lecture, worksheets, and seatwork to control student movement, encourage passivity, and discourage interaction. Oakes (1985, p. 7) concluded, "homogeneous grouping doesn't consistently help anyone learn better."

- *Issues related to disciplining and controlling minority students.* One factor related to the nonachievement of minority students is the disproportionate use of severe disciplinary practices. These practices lead to minority students being excluded from classes, their perceptions of mistreatment, and feelings of alienation and rejection. The National Coalition of Advocates for Students (1987) found that black students were involved in twice as many incidents of corporal punishment and school suspension as white students.

- *Issues related to black students' parents and community.* Teachers of minority students often do not understand the home environments and communities of their students and their parents. Minority parents complain that teachers treat them as a nuisance to be tolerated or, worse, as causes of their children's failure. Although most teacher-education programs include training in parent conferencing skills, seldom is attention given to minority parents who are not native or standard-English speakers or to teenaged parents.

Culture, Partnerships' Essential Element

How, then, can colleges and universities develop meaningful and effective collaborative programs with urban, predominantly black schools to enhance the achievement of African American students? Again the concepts inherent in the meaning of "culture" — values, beliefs, and norms — are informative and should be included in initial discussions and program planning.

Values

Values are ideas and things one perceives to be of importance. Values are associated with discussions about "what is right or wrong, and what ought to be" and goals worth attaining. Consequently, effective urban collaboratives must include joint planning, accompanied by frequent and honest dialogue centered around these

questions: What are the goals to be accomplished? What are the values of this school and its community? What are the values of the university? What are the shared visions and common agendas? Are there potential areas of conflict and disagreement?

When these issues of values are not initially addressed and frequently revisited, problems and frustrations can surface and partnerships eventually abandoned. For example, urban schools often enter into partnership relationships valuing and expecting rapid and dramatic increases in their students' standardized test scores; access to the university's facilities (such as use of the gym or library); donations of science equipment and computers, free field trips, undergraduate tutors; and preferential admissions and scholarships for their graduates.

On the other hand, colleges often enter into these relationships with less-clear expectations and goals, but nonetheless naively and arrogantly assured that whatever the problems are in these minority urban schools, the intellectual resources of the university can be garnered for a quick solution. Higher education values these collaborative ventures because they are "doing the right thing" and because the demographic data are clear that minority students are the future college student pool. Many predominantly white colleges and universities are viewed negatively in the black community, and collaboratives provide colleges with wonderful photo opportunities as well as opportunities to recruit urban schools' most academically talented students.

Recognizing these potential differences in goals and values, it is important that schools and universities pursue open discussions in search of shared visions and values. But values are not all — beliefs are equally important.

Beliefs

Beliefs are what one thinks is true, and they are often very resistant to change. One interesting way to unmask beliefs is to learn how we are perceived by "the other." What do black school personnel believe about predominantly white colleges and universities? What do college personnel believe about black public schools?

The following are some beliefs commonly held by black school personnel:

- That colleges are elitist and often deny admission to black school personnel and their family members.

- That faculty in colleges of education do not place student teachers in urban black schools because the faculty believe such schools are inferior and possibly dangerous.

- That educational research generated from higher education is irrelevant and has no practical implications. In addition, they believe that university researchers are responsible for negative images of black people and their communities.

- That black people are not employed on white college campuses unless they work in low-level, unskilled or clerical jobs, and there are few black professors or high-level administrators.

- That most college professors are incapable of effectively teaching in the typical urban classroom because they lack the physical stamina, persistence, and motivation required to do the work. In addition, many believe that the quality of college teaching is so poor that university people must first "clean their own house" before they attempt to tell school people how to teach.

- That the many hours spent in planning meetings and discussions is time lost from teaching their students, who are already scoring below average on standardized tests. The offer of substitute teachers or after-school meetings is not an attractive offer.

For their part, college personnel also hold some beliefs in common. Because most college personnel have had few experiences in predominantly black, urban schools, they derive their beliefs about such schools from the popular media. College personnel commonly believe:

- That although there are some exceptional black urban schools, most are places they would not choose to send their own children.

- That urban schools are large, unwieldy bureaucratic structures that house underclass children who are so incapacitated by the culture of poverty that teaching and learning are virtually impossible tasks.

- That urban school teachers are generally nice, committed people who work very hard at a thankless job, but that they are not intellectual equals or colleagues to college professors.

- That educational researchers have provided little or no research pertinent to solving the problems of urban minority schools. They believe that schools must be totally dismantled and restructured if any progress is to be attained.

- That arts and sciences faculty have limited or no responsibility to assist in the preparation of teachers. Arts and sciences faculty assume that job is the "burden" of education faculty.

- That the arts and sciences disciplines are incomprehensible to the majority of public school teachers.

It is important that schools and universities pursue open discussions in search of shared visions and values.

Again, what is called for is honest disclosure, the unveiling of beliefs and perceptions, in an effort to forge common agendas. Norms are integral parts of this process.

Norms

Norms are how one perceives things are done. Norms are characterized by the statement "It's the way things are done around here" (Kilmann 1985, p. 5). This cultural characteristic presents the greatest challenge to establishing meaningful partnerships between urban minority schools and higher education institutions.

Universities and colleges have century-old, revered traditions and rituals, processes and procedures that have changed slowly. Although higher education institutions are convinced that urban minority schools must completely discard their norms, higher education institutions seldom consider the possibility that they must also change.

There's a wonderful quote by Heilbrun that stays permanently fixed to my bulletin board: "Universities are not, or should not be, merely museums for the display of culture. They ought to be theaters for its ongoing creation and re-creation" (1990, p. 32).

It is this process of creation and re-creation, changing universities from museums into theaters, that is central to effective collaboratives. Universities must include school personnel as major actors, scriptwriters, producers, and directors, not merely as spectators to admire the work of university faculty.

Higher education institutions must change their norms regarding the reward system. Faculty who participate in partnership ventures must be rewarded during tenure and salary review. Full professors and high-level administrators should be highly visible in these efforts, not leaving this important task to more junior faculty. Also, universities must commit university monies to the collaborative projects. Too often universities participate in collaborative ventures only if outside monies can be acquired. That practice leads others to perceive that school collaboratives are peripheral to a university's primary mission, and eventually it leads to early abandonment of the partnership when outside resources are depleted.

Public schools must also change their cultural norms. Schools must be transformed into communities of learners, where students are respected and recognized as individuals and where they feel a sense of connection, intimacy, visibility, and self-worth. Teachers must be empowered by increasing their participation in decision making, school management, curriculum development, budgeting, staffing, and the design of effective incentive systems. Teachers must be rewarded for their efforts, given autonomy and flexibility to teach; they must be treated like professionals, and not like the children they teach.

The rigid and confining nature of school organizations impedes the implementation of partnerships. The bureaucratic and traditional "eggcrate" structures of schools are dinosaurs that dictate the operation of schools. Traditional structures fail to acknowledge that students have varying abilities and interests and that they learn at different rates, with different styles, with different teaching methods.

Critical Considerations for Urban School Collaboratives

How, then, can urban minority schools and colleges/universities design collaborative programs that are mutually beneficial to both institutions and that have as their principal goal the achievement of minority students?

I am clear that there is no one model, no "one best way" to proceed. What appears to be promising are current school-based collaborative models that are committed to the prospect of culture making, creating new structures, processes, roles, and pedagogy. Chaffee (1990) has said what will work is "neither a machine-like, cause-and-effect bureaucracy like most public schools, nor a biological system like a university, which constantly adapts in order to survive."

The best examples of these school-based, culture-making partnerships are found in the ideal visions of the Holmes Group's professional-development schools, Carnegie's clinical schools, and Rand's induction schools. Unfortunately, too few of these school-based programs exist in poor, urban, minority areas.

What are the critical considerations? I believe these college/school collaborative should be places where:

- Innovation, creativity, dialogue, critical review, collegiality, positive and dynamic tension, risk taking, experimentation, and role negotiation abound.
- Professors and teachers exchange work sites and work roles, and collaborate on mutually beneficial action research problems.
- Preservice teachers work with master urban teachers, learning and practicing contextualized teaching rather than relying on a repertoire of generic skills that are often ineffective in culturally diverse classrooms. Such arrangements allow preservice teachers to construct their understanding of teaching based on their students' needs, prior experiences, and culture, as well as their own beliefs about teaching and learning.
- Experienced master teachers, eager for professional renewal, attend graduate classes and serve as clinical faculty at the university.

- Reflection is the fundamental value that serves as the "cultural glue" for these new roles, relationships, norms, and beliefs. Reflection implies attitudes of open-mindedness with observational, empirical, analytical, and problem-solving skills necessary to continually monitor, evaluate, and revise practices (Schön 1987). Eisner (1983) called this skill ". . . educational connoisseurship — the ability to appreciate what one has encountered" (p. 11).

- Innovative instructional strategies, classroom grouping arrangements, and Afrocentric and emancipatory curricula and structures are designed, implemented, and evaluated.

- Teachers help minority students develop appropriate strategies to respond to and eradicate racism and inequality.

- Urban minority students are excited about school and learning — actively engaged in the construction of knowledge through critical thinking and experimentation.

- Freedom exists from oppressive state regulatory agencies. No significant partnerships can exist when teachers feel badgered into teaching for standardized testing, or when the plans of the partnership conflict with the mandates of state agencies. Frequently, state agencies overregulate and prescribe to both teacher-training institutions and schools. Their inflexibility and intolerance of innovative programs and experimental models have contributed to the continuing failure of minority students and their often ill-prepared teachers.

Conclusion

We cannot help my friend Darius and reverse the devastating cycle of minority student failure without visionary collaboratives designed by visionary educational leaders. As we approach the year 2000, there is a sense of urgency. Each class of school failures costs this country $240 billion in lost and foregone wages (W.T. Grant Foundation Commission 1988). Billions more are spent on dropouts in crime control and social services. Teacher recruitment and attrition in minority schools will continue to be major problems.

It seems clear that urban minority schools and higher education institutions must commit themselves, without delay, to planning, implementing, and evaluating new visionary collaboratives for visionless minority youngsters, less my friend Darius's inability to dream turns into a nightmare for us all. ■

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AAHE is a national organization of individuals joined in two related purposes: to advance the quality of American higher education and to advance their own effectiveness as teachers, learners, managers, and policy makers. AAHE's conferences, publications, and special projects serve as vehicles for the exchange of ideas and information that lead to genuine reform.

AAHE members receive ■ A free subscription to the bimonthly magazine *Change*. ■ Monthly issues of *AAHE Bulletin* throughout the academic year. ■ Special discounts on registration for the National Conference on Higher Education and other convenings. ■ Discounts on subscriptions to two non-AAHE periodicals: *The Journal of Higher Education* and *ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Reports*. ■ "Members Only" discounts on Hertz car rentals. ■ Voting privileges in AAHE elections. ■ Eligibility for membership in one or more of AAHE's special-interest groups: the Caucuses and the Action Communities. ■ Access to and services from AAHE's special projects.

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- *AAHE's Office of School/College Collaboration.* (See page 50.)

- *AAHE Assessment Forum.* The AAHE Assessment Forum coordinates and advances thoughtful assessment across the country. Its annual AAHE Conference on Assessment in Higher Education, publications, and information-referral services offer access to up-to-date information on assessment theory and practice.

- *AAHE Teaching Initiative.* Made possible by a gift from Allen Jossey-Bass, the AAHE Teaching Initiative includes a number of activities aimed at improving college teaching. At the center of those activities is a project funded by Lilly Endowment, Inc., to develop cases about classroom situations that faculty can use to reflect on their own practice. Also under the auspices of the Initiative, AAHE cosponsors a national conference on TA training; works with campuses to promote the development and use of the "teaching portfolio" to document

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AAHE's Office of School/College Collaboration was established in 1990 to coordinate the Association's growing involvement in linking the work of schools and colleges. The office promotes collaboration at the elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels through several special initiatives and a variety of services.

These activities include the following:

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The conference, an annual event in June, provides a forum for school and college administrators and faculty to share information and discuss new ideas and topical issues in collaboration and reform.

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The Community Compacts for Student Success initiative, administered by AAHE for the Pew Charitable Trusts, enables participating communities to develop and carry out collaborative, outcome-based, and systemic strategies to increase student graduation from high school and entry and success in postsecondary education.

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The Education Roundtable is a new initiative of AAHE aimed at drawing leaders from K-12 and higher education together to develop and carry out joint strategies to improve education — and student achievement — at all levels.

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